



# Species at Risk on Department of Defense Lands: Updated Analysis, Report, and Maps

Project # 14-772

## Background:

In 2001, a project was funded by the DoD Legacy Program to engage NatureServe, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the military services to identify Species at Risk (SAR) that are important to DoD installations. NatureServe conducted an analysis and the final product was a January 2004 report containing a methodology for selecting SAR, a nationwide assessment of SAR by military service, and an assessment of SAR by DoD installation. Another updated analysis and report were completed in 2011.

The dataset used for the last assessment of SAR in 2011 has changed significantly in just three years, with numerous updates to species' status information and over 17,800 additional SAR occurrences. For this current 2014 analysis, as with the past analyses, SAR are defined as native U.S. species that are not federally listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, but that are either candidates for listing or are ranked by NatureServe as critically imperiled (G1) or imperiled (G2) throughout their range. New for the 2014 analysis was the inclusion of birds that are regarded by NatureServe as vulnerable (G3) or have an IUCN status of CR, EN, VU, or NT.

## Objective:

In order for the Department of Defense to effectively protect, manage, and monitor at-risk species on its lands, DoD must have up-to-date information on where these species occur on their lands nationwide. With the most current species location data in NatureServe's databases, NatureServe provided updated lists of SAR by installation and revised maps.

## Summary of Approach:

The approach for these analyses was for NatureServe to conduct a detailed GIS analysis, overlaying the most accurate available military installation boundaries for the U.S. with NatureServe's species locations for identified SAR. SAR are considered to be located on a DoD installation if one or more population occurrence for a species resides completely or partially within the boundaries of an installation or within a 2 km (1.24 mi) buffer.

## Benefit:

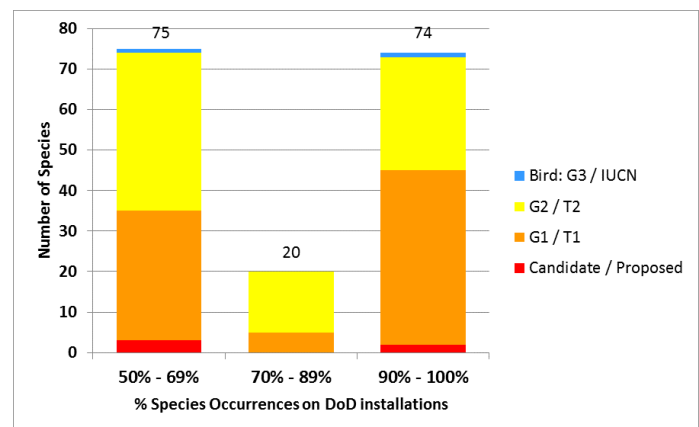
Conservation of SAR can preclude the need for additional species listings, which is beneficial to the

military in maintaining its lands for military training and other purposes. It is critical for the U.S. Department of Defense to base its conservation decisions on the most current and accurate scientific information available.

## Accomplishments:

NatureServe provided two major types of analyses: (1) analyses of species at risk that are highly dependent on DoD lands and management for their survival, and (2) overall summary analyses of installations with high numbers or densities of species at risk. These analyses aimed to help DoD to direct resources towards high priority species and installations.

A key finding of our updated 2014 assessment was that the total number of SAR on DoD lands remained similar to the numbers from 2011 (555 SAR were reported in 2014, while 519 SAR were reported in 2011), despite an increase of over 17,800 new SAR element occurrences in NatureServe's databases since 2011. On closer inspection, although the total number changed very little, the actual species on the lists differ. The reasons for these changes in species lists were due to several factors, including new population occurrences added to the NatureServe databases, more precise species location information, changes in federal status, changes in taxonomy, and changes in species conservation status assessment ranks. The addition of G3 and IUCN status birds is also new in 2014, although this addition only added about 20 species.



## Contact Information:

Nancy Benton, Project Manager, NatureServe  
4600 N. Fairfax Drive, 7th Floor  
Arlington, VA 22203  
Phone: 703/908-1886  
Nancy\_Benton@natureserve.org

